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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/769,920	02/03/2004	Shinji Hayashi	086142-0633	9767
22428	7590	01/11/2008	EXAMINER	
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP			SLITERIS, JOSELYNN Y	
SUITE 500				
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WASHINGTON, DC 20007			3616	
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			01/11/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 10/769,920	Applicant(s) HAYASHI ET AL.	
	Examiner Joselynn Y. Sliteris	Art Unit 3616	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 October 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 29-51 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 38-42, 44 and 45 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 29-37, 43 and 46-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 50 and 51 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                     |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 10/30/07 has been entered.

### ***Election/Restrictions***

2. Claims 38-42, 44, and 45 remain withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 4/18/06.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 29-32, 34-37, 43, and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Uehara et al. (U.S. Patent 6,113,131), as cited by applicant.

5. Regarding claims 29-32, 34-37, and 43, Uehara discloses a method of making a cover component 31A (Figs. 4A, 4B, 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B) mountable to an airbag system, as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 31a, 31b that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

providing a die having a core surface having a raised line formed on the core surface;

providing a moldable material 31A;

molding said moldable material using said die so as to form a molded material having a recessed line 31b corresponding to said raised line, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Figs. 4A, 4B attached);

providing a laser, and

irradiating said molded material using said laser so as to bore a plurality of hollows 31a in said recessed line along the central portion in said molded material at intervals, and;

wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line;

further comprising the step of attaching said molded material to said airbag system;

wherein the tear line 31a, 31b extends in an H shape (Figs. 1A, 4A, 6A, 7A);

wherein the bottom of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4B attached);

wherein the recessed line decreases in depth gradually toward the first or second end of the tear line;

wherein the tear line further comprises a region of reduced strength shaped so that the tear line is torn open in said region of reduced strength when the airbag inflates;

wherein the region of reduced strength is deeper than other parts of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength includes at least one hollow that has approximately the same depth as at least one hollow of another part of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength comprises at least a first hollow that has a ceiling that is approximately equidistant to a front surface of the cover component as a ceiling of at least a second hollow of another part of the recessed line.

6. Regarding claims 46-48, Uehara discloses a method of manufacturing a cover component 31A as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 31a, 31b that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

forming a recessed line 31b at least in a part of the tear line by using a raised line provided on a core surface of a die when the cover component is molded, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Figs. 4A, 4B attached); and

boring hollows 31a in the recessed line at intervals by laser processing;

wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line (Figs. 4A, 6A, 7A);

wherein the tear line extends in an H shape (Figs. 1A, 4A);

wherein the bottom of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is formed in a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4B attached).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 29-37, 43, and 46-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sawada et al. (U.S. Patent 5,195,773) in view of Uehara et al. (U.S. Patent 6,113,131), both cited by applicant.

9. Regarding claims 29-37 and 43, Sawada discloses a method of making a cover component 100 mountable to an airbag system, as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 2-4 that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

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providing a die having a core surface having a raised line formed on the core surface;

providing a moldable material 100;

molding said moldable material using said die so as to form a molded material having a recessed line 5 corresponding to said raised line, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion 2 with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Fig. 1 attached);

a plurality of hollows 6 in said recessed line along the central portion in said molded material at intervals (Figs. 2, 3);

wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line (see annotated Figs. 1 & 4 attached);

further comprising the step of attaching said molded material to said airbag system;

wherein the tear line 2-4 extends in an H shape (Fig. 1);

wherein the bottom of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4 attached);

wherein the hollows 6 extend only partially through the cover component 100;

wherein the recessed line decreases in depth gradually toward the first or second end of the tear line (Fig. 4);

wherein the tear line further comprises a region of reduced strength shaped so that the tear line is torn open in said region of reduced strength when the airbag inflates;

wherein the region of reduced strength is deeper than other parts of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength includes at least one hollow 6 that has approximately the same depth as at least one hollow 6 of another part of the recessed line;

wherein the region of reduced strength comprises at least a first hollow that has a ceiling that is approximately equidistant to a front surface of the cover component as a ceiling of at least a second hollow of another part of the recessed line.

But Sawada does not disclose providing a laser, and irradiating the molded material using the laser so as to bore the plurality of hollows in the recessed line in the molded material at intervals. Uehara discloses that it is known in the art to provide a laser, and irradiate the molded material 31A using the laser so as to bore a plurality of hollows 31a in the recessed line 31b in the molded material at intervals (Figs. 4A, 4B). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to bore the plurality of hollows in the recessed line in the molded material of Sawada using laser according to the teachings of Uehara, in order to facilitate the formation of the plurality of hollows in the recessed line in the molded material and to do it more economically.



10. Regarding claims 46-49, Sawada discloses a method of manufacturing a cover component 100 as in the present invention, the cover component having a tear line 2-4 that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising:

forming a recessed line 5 at least in a part of the tear line by using a raised line provided on a core surface of a die when the cover component is molded, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion 2 with opposing sides, and a second end (see annotated Fig. 1 attached); and

hollows 6 in the recessed line at intervals (Figs. 2, 3);

wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line (see annotated Figs. 1 & 4 attached);

wherein the tear line extends in an H shape (Fig. 1);

wherein the bottom of the recessed line near the first or second end of the recessed line is formed in a slope about 30° to 60° inclined relative to the back of the cover component (see annotated Fig. 4 attached);

further comprising forming the hollows to extend only partially through the cover component.

But Sawada does not disclose boring the hollows by laser processing. Uehara discloses that it is known in the art to bore the hollows 6 in the recessed line 5 at intervals by laser processing (Figs. 4A, 4B). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to bore the hollows of

Sawada in the recessed line by laser processing according to the teachings of Uehara, in order to facilitate the formation of the hollows in the recessed line and to do it more economically.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

11. Claims 50 and 51 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Response to Arguments***

12. Applicant's arguments filed 10/30/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

13. Applicant argues on page 7 of the Remarks, "However, the sloped surface for the groove 31b and tearable portion 31a of Uehara et al. inclined so that the sloped surface extends in a transverse direction of the recessed line, i.e., perpendicular to the recessed line. See Figures 4A and 4B of Uehara et al. Uehara et al. does not disclose a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system, "wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line ... The sloped surface disclosed by Uehara et al. is inclined in a different direction than that recited in claims 29 and 46 because the sloped surface of Uehara et al. extends in a direction that is

transverse to the recessed line. Therefore, Uehara et al. does not disclose all of the features of claims 29 and 46".

Examiner disagrees. While Uehara et al. discloses a sloped surface that extends in a direction that is transverse, i.e., perpendicular, to the recessed line 31b intermediate its longitudinal ends, it can be best seen in Figs. 6A & 7A (see annotations) that Uehara et al. discloses a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system, "wherein a bottom of the recessed line 31b at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line".

14. Applicant argues, "However, the sloped surface for the tear lines of Sawada et al. inclined so that the sloped surface extends in a transverse direction to the tear lines, i.e., perpendicular to the tear lines. See Figures 1 and 4 of Sawada et al. Sawada et al. does not disclose a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system, "wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line." Therefore, Sawada et al. does not disclose or suggest all of the features of claims 29 and 46".

Again, examiner disagrees. Examiner points out that although Figure 4 discloses the sloped surface extending in a transverse direction to the tear line 2, i.e., perpendicular to the tear line, Fig. 1 of Sawada et al. discloses a method of making a

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cover component mountable to an airbag system, "wherein a bottom of the recessed line 5 at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line 5" because of tear lines 3, 4 (see annotated Fig. 1).

### ***Conclusion***

15. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the application prior to the entry of the submission under 37 CFR 1.114 and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the application prior to entry under 37 CFR 1.114. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action after the filing of a request for continued examination and the submission under 37 CFR 1.114. See MPEP § 706.07(b).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

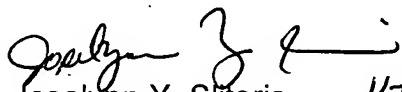
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

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16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joselynn Y. Sliteris whose telephone number is 571-272-6675. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul N. Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Joselynn Y. Sliteris 1/7/08  
Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 3616

JYS  
1/7/08

RUTH ILAN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

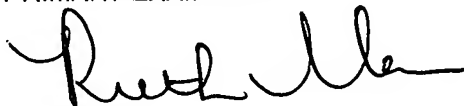


FIG. 4 A

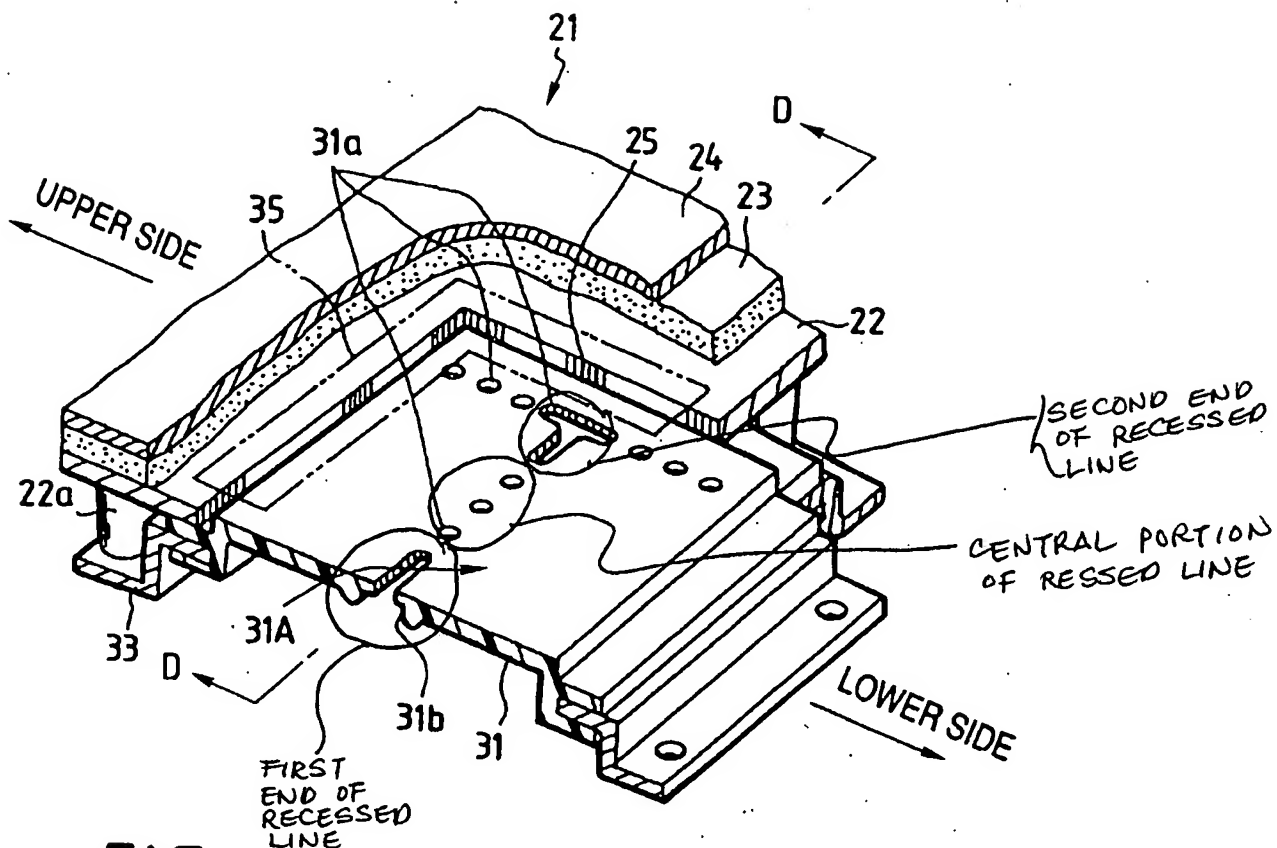
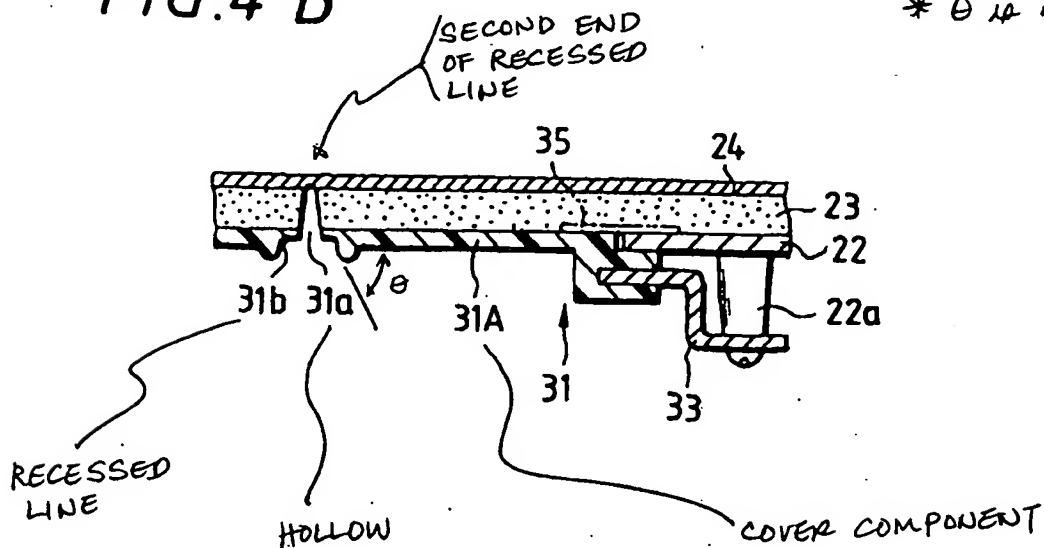
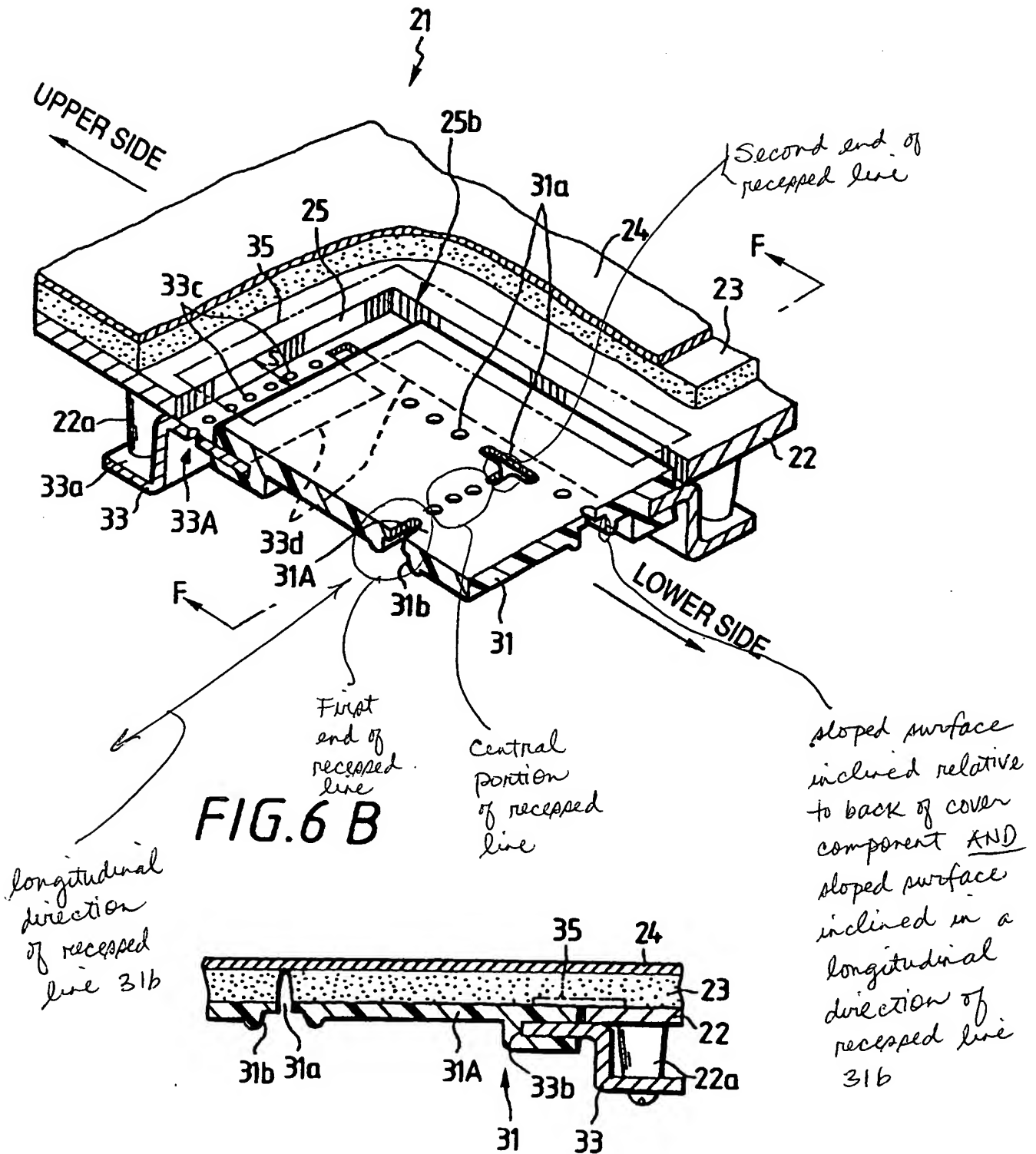


FIG. 4 B

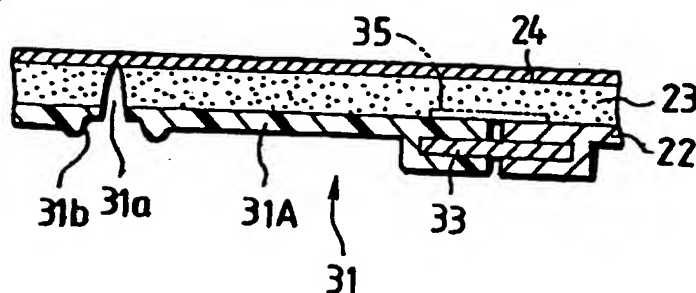
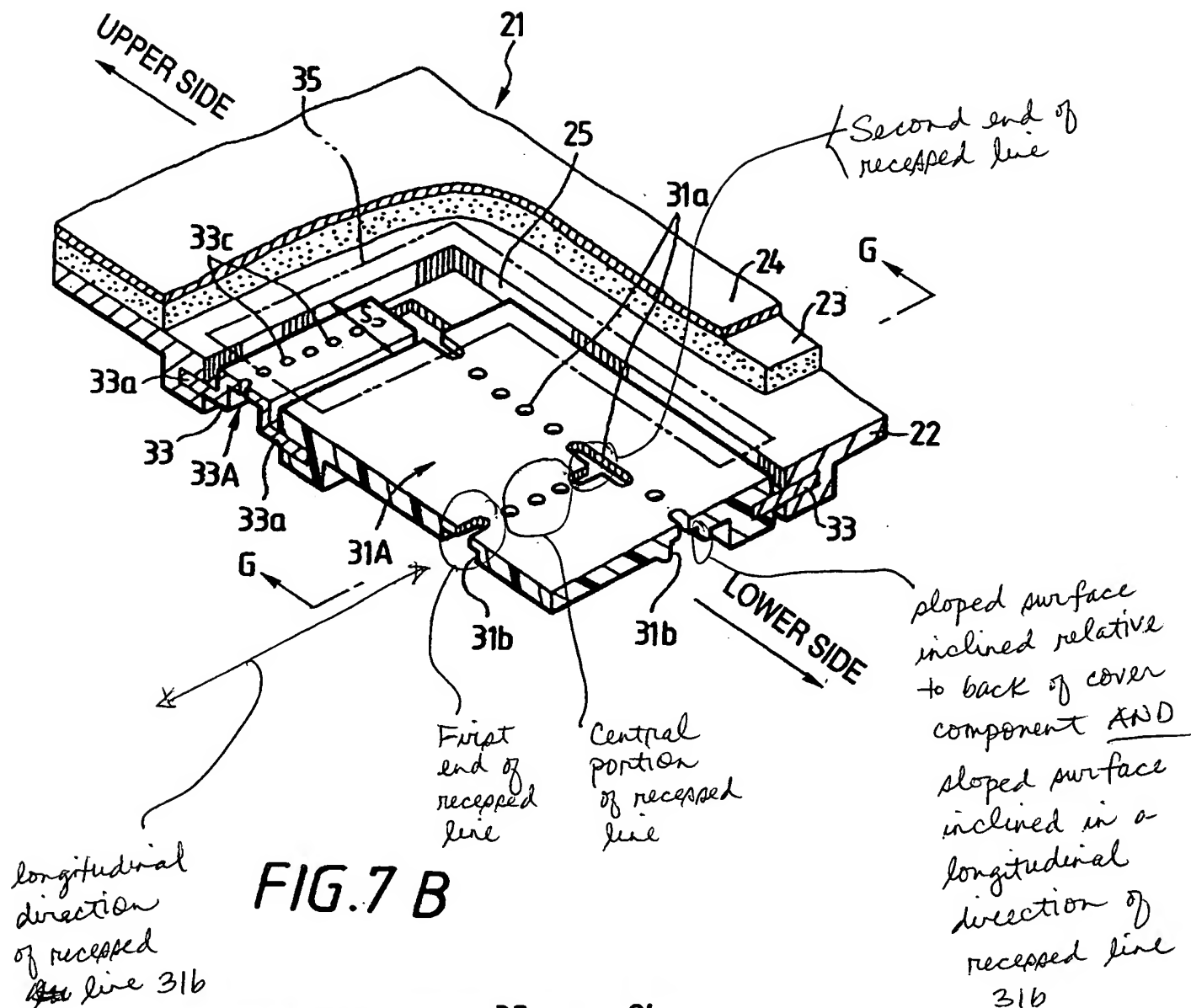


\*  $\theta$  is about  $30^\circ$  to  $60^\circ$

**FIG. 6 A**



**FIG. 7 A**



**FIG. 7 B**



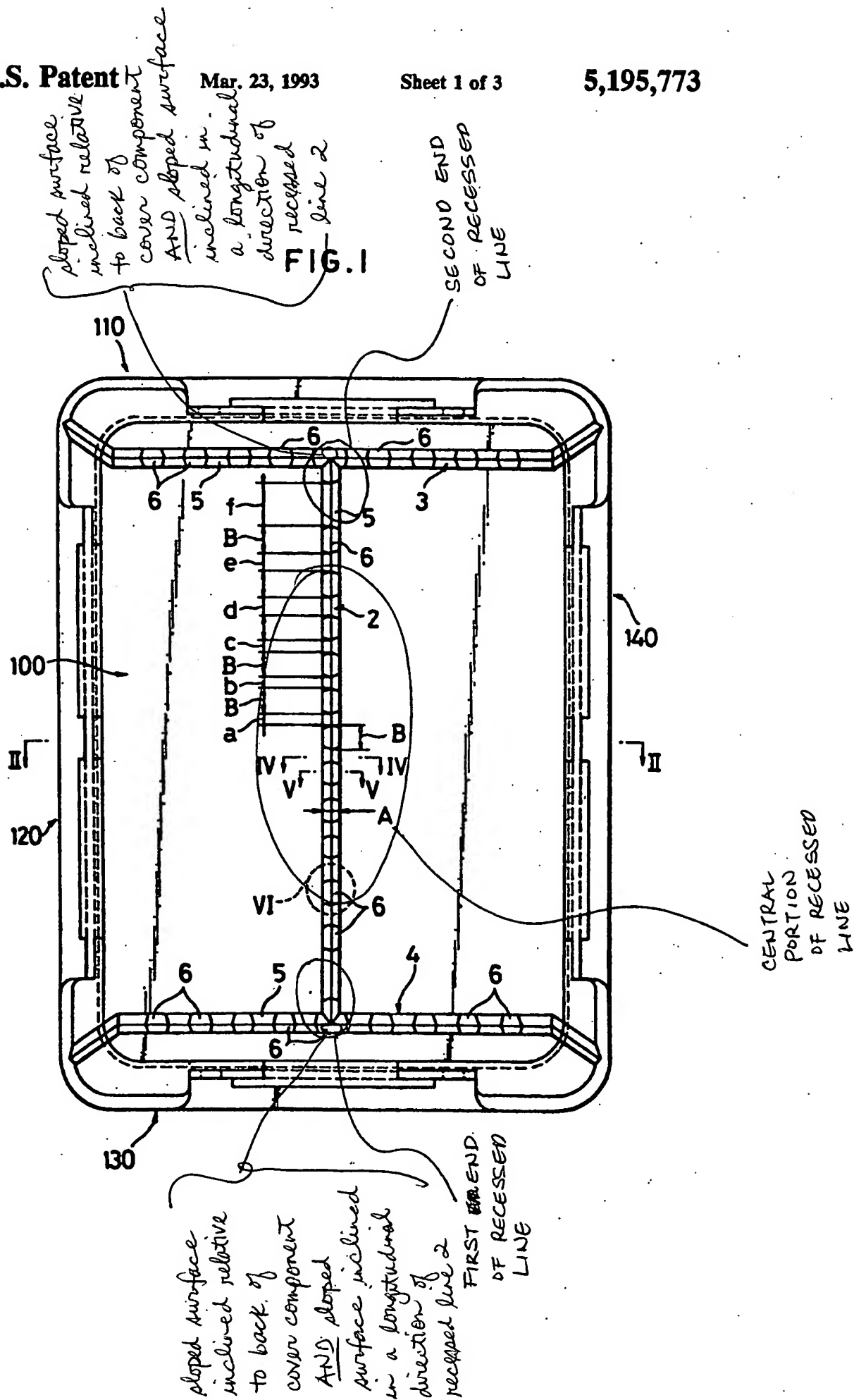


FIG. 2

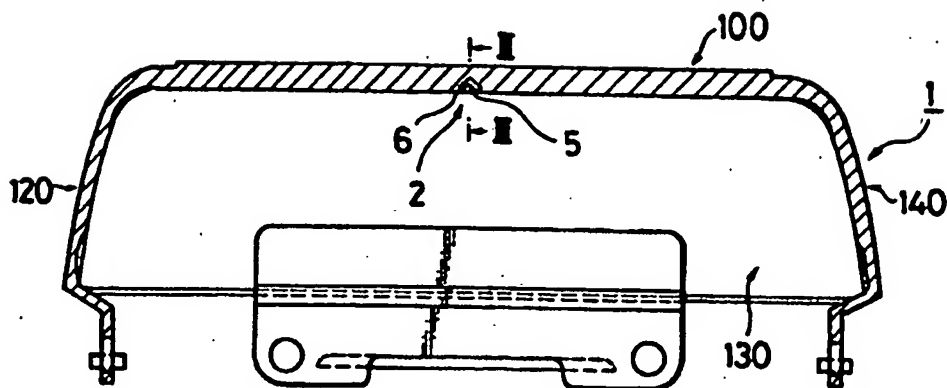


FIG. 3

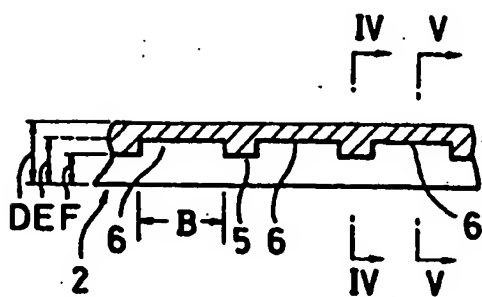
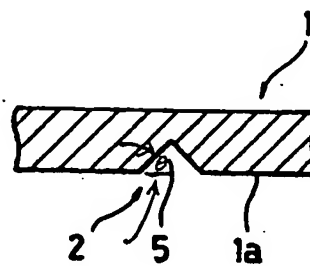


FIG. 4



\*  $\theta$  is about  $30^\circ$  to  $60^\circ$

FIG. 5A

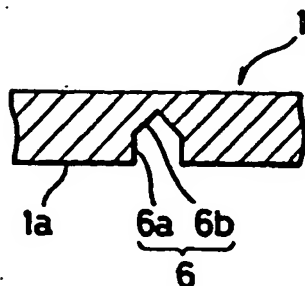


FIG. 5B

